

LOCAL BUSINESS IS OUR BUSINESS THE SUPER BOWL

SMALL BUSINESS SCORES BIG

A West Palm Beach ink-and-toner store gets in on the Super Bowl action.

By ALLISON ROSS
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WEST PALM BEACH — Jane Bloom is just one of those people.

You know, the type that always is busy doing something, getting involved, trying something new.

"I like always running, always having my hands full," Bloom said. "My sisters think I'm crazy that I never have any free time."

So it was only natural that Bloom would decide that her small business needed to be a part of the Super Bowl XLIV action.

In April, she and about 450 other small, minority- and women-owned businesses in the county attended an NFL Emerging Business Workshop in hopes of securing business opportunities related to the Feb. 7 game at Sun Life Stadium in Miami Gardens.

Her West Palm Beach-based company, Ink & Toner USA, was one of only a handful of Palm Beach County businesses to win contracts.

"We knew we could provide business for them at a great price if they'd give us the opportunity," said Bloom, who's been supplying ink and toner cartridges to the event's organizing office in Miami about twice a month.

The additional business will bring in about \$6,000 to her company.

"The process was actually really great, and they've



BRUCE R. BENNETT/2007 Post file photo

Bob and Jane Bloom opened Ink & Toner USA in 2004. They attended an NFL Emerging Business Workshop and ended up getting a contract to supply the organizing office of Super Bowl XLIV in Miami.

Super Bowl contracts boost business

- A Green Wave Gift, Boynton Beach: catering, gift baskets and novelty and promotional items
- A & A Security, West Palm Beach: security
- Ink & Toner USA, West Palm Beach: office supplies
- DJ AI Entertainment, Riviera Beach: entertainment, photography, video, sound
- Custom Signs Today, West Palm Beach: printing, graphics, signs and banners

SOURCE: South Florida Super Bowl Host Committee

been very cooperative," Bloom said. "To us, this contract means a good amount of work."

Since opening her discount ink and toner and office supplies store in 2004 with her husband, Bob, Bloom said her company has become the largest such store in the county.

"We thought there was a need for a store that sells cartridges that are not necessarily brand-name," she

said. The company sells mostly remanufactured and compatible ink and toner cartridges that are generally cheaper than their name-brand counterparts. The store also refills certain ink cartridges.

"People can save their money and save the environment this way," Bloom said, adding that buying discount cartridges can save between 20 percent and 70 percent.

Ink & Toner USA has thrived in the past several years, with gross yearly sales of about \$500,000.

The Blooms also are trying to build a chain of independent stores by teaching other entrepreneurs how to replicate their business model without making them pay franchising fees or royalties.

After her experience working with the Super Bowl organizers, Bloom said she plans on trying to secure more big contracts. She has a bid in with the Palm Beach County School District and would like to explore opportunities with the Palm Beach County Convention Center, as well.

"I wish the Super Bowl wouldn't shut down so we could keep helping them," Bloom said. "But I'm looking forward to having other opportunities like the Super Bowl soon."

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